

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

January 5, 2024

What it means to be “Saved”

What does it mean to be “*saved*?” Before we can answer this question, we must consider what the word “*saved*” actually means. The Greek word translated as “*saved*” in the Bible means “*to deliver or protect.*” Think of a person trapped in a burning building. The “*savior*” in this scenario might be the fireman who rescued (or delivered) them from the flames. If a person had been kidnapped, those who delivered them from the kidnappers would be the “*savior*” in that situation. In each of these examples, a person is “*saved,*” or rescued, from danger or death. Now to understand scriptural “*salvation*” we must discover what Jesus actually saves us from.

After John the Baptist was born, the Holy Ghost came upon Zechariah, John’s father, and he prophesied of the coming Messiah and the salvation he would bring. He said God *has “...raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: **That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.**”* Luke 1:69-71. This great “*deliverance*” from our enemies is the essence of salvation. But then, who are our enemies?

Some tell us salvation is our deliverance from God's punishment for sin, but since salvation is *"...from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us,"* would not that then make God the enemy? Such a thought is absurd! God did not hate us. The Bible says, *"God so loved the world."*

John 3:16.

Paul gave insight into who our enemies are when he wrote, *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

Ephesians 6:12. Our enemies are not other people. They are Satan and the powers of darkness. If you think your enemy has a human face, you have already lost the battle because *"we wrestle not against flesh and blood."*

Our greatest enemy, however, is not Satan, but something he brought upon us through his deception and rebellion. This great enemy is called Sin. Sin is not just an act, but a spiritual power that has dominion in the heart of fallen humanity. Jesus described sin as a slave master John 8:34, and Paul also spoke of the lost person as being a *"servant (slave) of sin."* Romans 6:17. He described sin as a power that once dwelt in him which caused him to commit the actions of sin.

Romans 7:17.

Sin, Satan and the power of darkness are the great enemies which Jesus came to *"deliver and protect"* us from. This is the same message the angel gave to Joseph, saying, *"...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from*

their sins." Matthew 1:21. The Apostle Paul describes how Jesus Christ delivered us from sin, saying, "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*" Romans 6:6. The Bible also describes our deliverance from Satan, saying, "*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*" Hebrews 2:14-15.

Now consider this: If you were trapped in a burning building and someone came to save you, would you be "saved" if they left you in the building dying in the flames? Of course not! You would only be saved if you had been delivered from the building and its flames. Why is it then that in church theology we declare that "saved" people are still under sin's dominion? Isn't that a contradiction? **There is really no such thing as a saved sinner. Either you are a sinner, or you are now one who has been saved from sin.** Yes, a person who had been saved from a burning building could return to the fire and perish in the building, but they were not saved from the fire unless they had been rescued out of it. Even so a person Christ has saved from sin could possibly return back to the bondage of sin, but in doing so they have abandoned their salvation. Peter describes this situation, saying, "***For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus***

Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.” II Peter 2:20. Peter goes on to say, *“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”* II Peter 2:22. We have been washed from our sins, but those who return to it are returning to their *“wallowing in the mire.”* If you were saved, you were delivered from sin by the blood of Christ. If you are back in sin, it is because you turned back to something which Christ had delivered you from.

“Salvation” is the work Christ accomplished upon the cross to deliver us from sin. The term *“saved”* describes those who have now been rescued from sin’s dominion; from its power; and from its presence. So, the next time you say, *“I am saved,”* answer this one question: *“What are you saved from?”*